

From: Sierra Club North Carolina Chapter [reply@emails.sierraclub.org]
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Subject: [External] Footnotes Online - October 2017

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Dear Supporter,

Crisp weather, colorful leaves, blue skies - it's another North Carolina autumn, and an excellent time to enjoy and explore the outdoors with fellow Sierrans. From the mountains to the coast, Sierra Club groups and outings leaders are organizing hikes, paddles, wildlife-watching walks and other activities that give us a chance to get together and appreciate the special things Sierrans work so hard to protect. [Have a look at some pictures from a recent kayaking adventure on Falls Lake!](#) Then check out the list at the bottom of this newsletter or [visit the calendar on our website](#) to find an adventure near you! Thanks for all you do, Your Staff at the NC Sierra Club



Who should pay for Duke's coal ash cleanup?

It's long been a core principle of the environmental movement that the polluter should pay.

But when it comes to the cost of cleaning up the tons of coal ash stored for decades in unlined pits next to our waterways, Duke Energy says their customers should pay.

Earlier this year, Duke Energy Progress requested permission to raise residential customers rates by a whopping 16.7 percent. Much of the increase is to pay for the cost of cleaning up some of the leaking coal ash pits across the state, as ordered by the Legislature following the historic 2014 Dan River spill. The rate increases would hurt most those who are least able to pay - including some of the very same citizens whose wells were contaminated by coal ash.

Sierra Club volunteers and our allies, led by the NC Beyond Coal team, worked to highlight the massive public resistance to Duke's request at five public hearings across the state. More than 550 people attended hearings in Raleigh, Asheville, Wilmington, Rockingham and Snow Hill. Nearly all who testified were opposed to the rate request, demanding that Duke be held responsible for the cost of coal ash cleanup. And more than 5,000 Sierra Club supporters have submitted a public comment to the Utilities Commission demanding "no rate hikes for dirty energy."

Stay posted for even more rate case hearings in the beginning of next year!



Legislature leaves without overriding "garbage juice" veto

North Carolina environmental advocates have a minute - or, more accurately, three months - to catch their breath after the General Assembly ended the year's fourth add-on session.

The North Carolina General Assembly has always prided itself on being a part-time body in which ordinary citizens can serve. But increasingly, the Legislature is meeting year-round, with little or no advance notice of what may be taken up. Often, that list includes environmentally harmful bills.

In their October session, state lawmakers met to override Cooper's veto of a measure that cancels judiciary primaries in 2018. House and Senate leaders said they want to call off the primary elections for Superior and District courts because they intend to redraw those districts.

Left unaddressed until January was Cooper's veto of the "garbage juice" bill that would require the state Department of Environmental Quality to allow leachate aerosolization, an unproven technology in which landfill wastewater is sprayed back over the dump to evaporate the liquid.

Also pending is a bill that would sharply undercut the ability of agencies and commissions to adopt common-sense, needed rules including those affecting the environment and public health. The Senate passed the measure but the House hasn't voted on the bill's current version.

Thank you to all the Sierrans who called, wrote and visited their legislators this year to advocate for the environment!



Atlantic Coast Pipeline opposition continues as regulators deliberate

The Sierra Club is still working to defeat the Atlantic Coast Pipeline as federal and state regulators issue differing verdicts on the project.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has approved a conditional certificate of need to the Dominion Energy/Duke Energy project, which would bring fracked gas from West Virginia through Virginia and across North Carolina.

North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) denied permits that would say the project meets water safety and soil and erosion control standards, pending additional information. The developers have submitted additional information in hopes of getting a favorable opinion.

If you'd like to join the fight against the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, you can:

- [Attend a public hearing at 6 p.m. on Nov. 15](#) on an air permit for a proposed compressor station in Northampton County
- [Email Governor Cooper](#) to thank him for standing up to protect North Carolinians from this dangerous fracked gas project

For more information, [contact Sierra Club organizer Caroline Hansley](#). And for current information on the ACP's environmental review process, [check DEQ's website](#).



Wood pellet forum highlighted concerns over threats to coastal forests

Coastal Sierrans have long had concerns about the burgeoning wood pellet industry and its potential impact on Southeastern forests. The Sierra Club's Cape Fear Group, led by Priss Endo, convened environmental allies in providing much-needed detail and analysis of the threats posed

by the wood pellet industry in a day-long forum at UNC-Wilmington.

More than 100 people attended the Wood Pellet Forum, also sponsored by Clean Air Carolina and the Dogwood Alliance, to hear speakers address the industry's impact on trade policies, biodiversity and climate change. Experts from academia, medicine, and environmental policy spoke on two panels that concentrated on the biological and environmental impacts of the wood pellet industry, as well as the economics both in the United States and the United Kingdom, where demand is driven by the need for biomass to create electricity.

The Cape Fear Group and its allies are sounding the alarm that wood pellets, a so-called 'green fuel' is anything but. Not only does burning wood add to carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, but the industry is damaging critical forest habitats in the Southeast with clear cuts in both upland and bottomland hardwood and pine forests.

Across the region, 19 wood pellet manufacturing facilities have been built, including Enviva's Ahoskie facility, opened in Hertford County in November 2011. The facilities are located exclusively in low-wealth rural counties that lack the resources to fight the wood pellet companies. Residents of these counties, particularly children, are the first to be affected by significant air pollution that results from wood pellet production. Enviva has proposed two new facilities in North Carolina; permits for the construction of the facilities are being challenged.

[This story in Coastal Review Online](#) has a wealth of details on the forum and the wood pellet industry in the Southeast.



Volunteer Chapter treasurer needed

The NC Sierra Club Chapter is seeking a new volunteer treasurer for 2018 to continue our careful management of the Chapter's financial resources.

Our current Treasurer, Sherry Bowlin, will step down early next year. We greatly appreciate Sherry's service, in particular her work to produce guidelines and procedures that will make the next treasurer's job easier.

The treasurer's role requires an understanding of general ledger, financial reporting, and internal

controls. Also useful would be:

- A background in accounting
- Some experience with banking relations
- Experience with QuickBooks

Please contact Chapter Chair Steve Copulsky (scopulsky@mindspring.com or 704-543-7493) if you are interested in discussing this position or would like to recommend someone.



'Arctic Sunrise' shines a light on offshore drilling

Will you be on the coast this weekend? Stop by to see the Greenpeace ocean warrior ship, the Arctic Sunrise. The ship will be at the Port City Marina in Wilmington this weekend as Greenpeace works alongside our Don't Drill NC coalition to highlight concerns over offshore drilling.

The Greenpeace tour, "Protecting Our Communities, Coasts and Climate," has made port in cities along the East Coast that would be directly affected by offshore drilling. After the Trump administration reversed President Obama's order to remove the Atlantic Coast from the threat of offshore energy exploration, citizen groups and NGOs that had fought for the exclusion reorganized and geared up for another battle.

The Arctic Sunrise, a beautiful 166-foot icebreaker, will visit Wilmington to remind coastal residents of the dangers of offshore drilling with free tours and evening events during its stay in port.

If you are interested in seeing the ship, going on a tour, or participating in one of the events, [visit the Greenpeace website for more information](#). The Port City Marina is at 10 Harnett Street in downtown Wilmington.

Upcoming Outings and Events

Note: All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. To register, contact the group leader(s) or [visit the Outings and Events calendar](#) on our website.

Saturday, Nov. 4, to Monday, Nov. 6

Hike Turkey Pen Gap - North Carolina Chapter Outing

South Mills River area near Brevard. Rated moderate to strenuous for elevation and distance.

Contact/leader: Jerry Weston (336) 856-1431 jweston@gbwlaw.com

Saturday, Nov. 4, 9 AM

Buck Spring Trail - Wenoca Group Outing

Join us for this early November high elevation hike from the Pisgah Inn to US Hwy 276. Approximately 6.2 miles (one-way) with car shuttle. Moderate with minimal elevation gain, but mostly follows the contour. Buck Spring Trail is also designated the Mountains to the Sea Trail along this route. We'll learn about the developing forest Plan for the Pisgah District.

Contact/leader: David Reid (828) 713-1607 daviddbreid@charter.net

Saturday, Nov. 11, 10 AM

Cedar Rock & Burnt Mtn Trails in Dupont State Forest - Wenoca Group Outing

Distance approx 5.5 miles round trip. The hike starts at Corn Mill Shoals trail, then to Burnt Mtn trail, which offers some interesting rocky areas. Back via Little River trail, and then to the top of Cedar Rock. There we'll have some great rock outcrops and nice views of the surrounding mountains. Learn about the history of this area and how it came to be designated as park land; also about an adjacent area that is a Superfund site.

Contact/leader: Lisa Mcwherter (828) 713-4994 lisamcw2@gmail.com

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 9:30 AM

Coontree Loop Trail - Pisgah District - Wenoca Group Outing

This moderate 3.7 mile loop trail begins and ends at the Coontree Picnic area on Hwy 276 near Brevard. A perfect mid-November outing along Coontree Creek. The leaves will be gone, but we'll learn some common winter-time tree identification.

Contact/leader: David Reid (828) 713-1607 daviddbreid@charter.net

For further details and to register for events, [please visit our Outings calendar.](#)

[Please consider making a donation today to help us protect North Carolina's air, water, and natural places.](#)



This email was sent to: [**jeremy.tarr@nc.gov**](mailto:jeremy.tarr@nc.gov)

This email was sent by the [Sierra Club North Carolina Chapter](#)
19 W Hargett St, Suite 210 Raleigh, NC 27601

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